suitable technologies for up-gradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signalling and interlocking systems, safety drives and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. As a result, there has been a declining trend in the number of consequential train accidents. In the current year during April to October, 2009, consequential train accidents decreased from 105 to 82 in comparison to the corresponding period of the previous year.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The number of Manned and Unmanned Level Crossings on Indian Railways as on 01.04.2009 is 17244 and 16976, respectively. As the unmanned level crossings are being progressively manned on continuous basis, unmanned level crossing accidents have decreased from 72 in 2006-07 to 65 in 2007-08 and further to 62 in 2008-09.

Duranto trains

1048. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have started non-stop air conditioned trains connecting a few cities;

(b) if so, the details of such trains known as "Duranto trains" started so far;

(c) whether all the Duranto trains have been made operational;

(d) whether Railways contemplate to introduce more such services between important cities especially in Jharkhand; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Railways have started both AC and non AC non-stop Duronto trains connecting important cities.

The following Duronto trains have been introduced so far:—

1. Sealdah-New Delhi (AC)
2. Chennai-Nizamuddin
3. Nizamuddin-Pune (AC)
4. Howrah-Mumbai CST(AC)
5. Nagpur-Mumbai CST

(c) Of the 14 pairs of Duronto trains announced, 5 pairs have been introduced, the remaining 9 pairs of trains will be introduced during the year 2009-10.

(d) At present there is no such proposal.

(e) Does not arise.

Shortage of porters

1049. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: